

Remarks

Claims 1-12 are pending. By this paper, claims 1 and 8 have been amended to place the claims in better form, and to otherwise clarify the claimed invention. No claims have been canceled.

In the final rejection mailed June 16, 2000, the Examiner maintained the rejection of claims 1-4 and 6-11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anand et al. (U.S. 5,710,900, hereinafter "Anand '900") in view of Peters et al. (U.S. 5,884,284, hereinafter "Peters"), as well as the rejection of claims 5 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anand '900 in view of Peters, and in further view of Melchione et al. (US 5,930,764, hereinafter "Melchione"). Both of these rejections are again respectfully traversed, and reconsideration requested in view of the following remarks.

As noted in Applicants' previous response, Anand '900 discloses an arrangement for generating a report using data stored in a data warehouse. The arrangement does not require the user to understand or interpret the data itself. A GUI allows a user to select and specify parameters for the report, display the report, print the report, and save the report. An application program allows a user to define predetermined data types, as well as relationships between the data types. As acknowledged by the Examiner in the Office Action, Anand '900 fails to provide any teaching of generating an on-line report containing billing and inventory data.

In addition, Applicants contend that the report generating arrangement of Anand '900 fails to provide any teaching or suggestion that data maintained separately from the database can be input and related with the user's billing and inventory data for display in a report. The Examiner has responded to Applicants' previous arguments by stating "Anand does teach that feature (allows user to generate related reports (col. 1, lines 54-62); allow users to regenerate related reports over new data (col. 2, lines 39-41))."

However, Applicants point out that the passages relied upon by the Examiner never disclose nor suggest that any new data used in a related or re-run report is maintained separately from the database. In fact, Anand clearly teach that reports are generated based only on data stored in the data warehouse 24 and associated metadata 25. In addition, as disclosed in col. 11, lines 52-65, Anand clearly describes that any new report segments used to group data must be supported by an existing data attribute in the warehouse data.

Simply stated, Anand neither teaches nor suggests allowing data maintained separately from the data warehouse to be input and displayed on a report, let alone related to a user's billing and invoice data for display in a report as set forth in amended claims 1 and 8. Only Applicants' claims 1 and 8 provide an arrangement that allows a user to customize an on-line billing and inventory report to relate externally maintained data, i.e., non-database data, with a user's billing and inventory data for display in a report. Support for this further amendment can be found on page 11, lines 14-28 of Applicants' originally filed specification.

Peters does not overcome the above-noted deficiencies in the teachings of Anand '990. As noted in Applicants' previous response, Peters discloses a computerized system for managing telecommunication user accounts. The system creates, maintains, processes and analyzes data regarding individual users and their telecommunication services. The purpose of the Peters system is to integrate reporting of data maintained in various system databases. However, as with Anand '900, Peters provides no suggestion that externally maintained data can be related to a user's billing and inventory data for display in a report. In response, the Examiner states "Peter does teach that feature (the invention may create, maintain ... television services (col 2, lines 20-45; col 1, lines 10-24); information is updated by various functions of the system, controlled by users at the system terminal ... information is updated automatically (col 6, lines 4-12)."

However, Applicants point out that nowhere in any of these passages or anywhere else does Peters provide any suggestion that the generated reports display any data not otherwise maintained in an associated cable television database. See for example col. 5, line 63, to col. 6, line 3 of Peters. Only Applicants' claimed invention provides a truly flexible billing and inventory on-line report generating arrangement that permits separately maintained data to be related to a user's billing and inventory data for display on a report.

Thus, without conceding that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Anand and Peters as suggested by the Examiner, Applicants point out that the asserted combination still fails to teach or suggest every limitation of claim 1 and 8. As such, Applicants contend that claims 1 and 8 are patentable over the combination of Anand '900 and Peters.

Regarding claims 2-7 and 9-12, without conceding the Examiner's position, Applicants contend these claims are allowable as a result of their respective dependency from claim 1 or 8.


From the foregoing, Applicants submit that the claims are allowable over the references of record in this application, and reconsideration of the claims and passage of the application to issue are courteously solicited. If a telephone conference would expedite allowance or resolve any further questions, such a conference with the undersigned is invited at the convenience of the Examiner.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee of \$110.00 associated with the request for a one month extension of time, as well as any deficiencies or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper, to Qwest Communication's Deposit Account No. 21-0456.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Twice amended) A system for generating an on-line report containing user billing and inventory information comprising:

a host site connected to at least one user computer terminal via an on-line interconnection, said host site comprising a database for storing the user billing and inventory information, and a processor terminal connected to the on-line interconnection for receiving user report requests and sending reports created in response to the received requests and additional on-line user input, wherein said processor terminal comprises:

a view manager arranged to generate a set of function commands which can be selectively launched by user input to graphically display a list of available views each of which contains a report relating to particular user information stored in a database, create a new view and report, and edit a view and report; and

a data manager arranged to [allow input of user defined data, and user generated and maintained data] relate data maintained separately from the database and input by a user with the user's billing and inventory data for [insertion into] display as part of a requested report.

8. (Twice Amended) A method for generating an on-line report containing user billing and inventory information in response to an inquiry from a user computer terminal via an on-line connection, said method comprising:

generating a graphical user interface for on-line access by the user, said graphical user interface providing a set of function commands which can be selectively launched to graphically display a list of available views each of which contains a report relating to particular user information stored in a database, create a new view and report, edit a view and report, [and] allow input of user defined data[, and user generated] and data separately maintained [data to be inserted] from the database, and relate the separately maintained data with the user's billing and inventory data for display in[to] a report;

creating a report based on user responses to the set of commands; and
sending the created report to the user terminal via the on-line connection.